

In the Claims

1. A vacuum cleaner, comprising:
  - a nozzle assembly having an inlet opening;
  - a canister assembly connected to said nozzle assembly;
  - a suction generator carried on one of said nozzle assembly5 and said canister assembly;
  - a dirt collection vessel carried on one of said nozzle assembly and said canister assembly, said dirt collection vessel including a top wall, a sidewall and a bottom wall, an air inlet in said top wall and an air outlet in one of said sidewall and said bottom wall.
2. The vacuum cleaner of claim 1 wherein said dirt collection vessel includes a lid.
3. The vacuum cleaner of claim 1 further including an agitator on said nozzle assembly held in said inlet opening.
4. A vacuum cleaner, comprising:
  - a nozzle assembly having an inlet opening;

a canister assembly connected to said nozzle assembly;

a cyclonic separation chamber having an inlet, a first outlet and a second outlet, said cyclonic separation chamber being carried on one of said nozzle assembly and said canister assembly;

5 a dirt collection vessel having a dirty air inlet in fluid communication with said first outlet and a discharge outlet, said dirt collection vessel being carried on one of said nozzle assembly and said canister assembly; and

a suction generator carried on one of said nozzle assembly and said canister assembly.

5. The vacuum cleaner of claim 4, further including a discharge conduit in fluid communication with (a) said second outlet, (b) said discharge outlet and (c) an intake of said suction generator.

6. The vacuum cleaner of claim 5, further including a flow control valve in said discharge conduit between said second outlet and said discharge outlet.

7. The vacuum cleaner of claim 6, wherein said flow control valve is displaceable between a first position wherein said discharge outlet is closed off from said suction generator intake and a second position wherein said second outlet is closed off from said suction generator intake.

8. The vacuum cleaner of claim 7, further including a dust bag held in said dirt collection vessel, said dust bag including an inlet receiving dirty air from said first outlet.

9. The vacuum cleaner of claim 8, wherein said dust bag is made from a material porous to air.

10. The vacuum cleaner of claim 8, wherein at least a portion of said dust bag and at least a portion of said dirt collection vessel are transparent.

11. The vacuum cleaner of claim 5 wherein an air filter is provided in said discharge conduit downstream from said second outlet.

12. The vacuum cleaner of claim 11, wherein said air filter is upstream of said discharge outlet.

13. The vacuum cleaner of claim 4, including a dirt filter over said second outlet.

14. The vacuum cleaner of claim 4, wherein said cyclonic separation chamber is substantially cylindrical in shape and includes an end wall and a sidewall, said first outlet being located adjacent said sidewall and said second outlet being located adjacent an axial centerline

5 of said cyclonic separation chamber on said end wall.

15. The vacuum cleaner of claim 14, wherein said first outlet is also in said end wall.

16. The vacuum cleaner of claim 4 further including an agitator on said nozzle assembly held in said inlet opening.

17. A vacuum cleaner, comprising:  
a housing;  
a cyclonic separation chamber having an inlet and an outlet;  
a dirt cup in fluid communication with said cyclonic  
5 separation chamber; and  
a suction generator in fluid communication with said dirt cup.

18. A vacuum cleaner, comprising:  
a housing;  
a cyclonic separation chamber carried on said housing, said  
cyclonic separation chamber including a first inlet, a first outlet and a  
5 second outlet;  
a dirt cup having a second inlet in fluid communication with  
said first outlet and a third outlet; and  
a suction generator having a third inlet in fluid

communication with said second outlet and said third outlet.

19. The vacuum cleaner of claim 18 further including a valve for selectively controlling airflow between (a) said second and third outlets and (b) said third inlet.

20. A vacuum cleaner, comprising:

a housing;

a cyclonic separation chamber carried on said housing;

a dirt collection vessel separate from but in fluid

5 communication with said cyclonic separation chamber; and

a suction generator carried on said housing.